

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5217

As Reported by House Committee On: Higher Education

Title: An act relating to appointing student members on the board of trustees for community colleges.

Brief Description: Allowing appointment of student members on the boards of trustees of community colleges.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development (originally sponsored by Senators Shin, White, Nelson, Sheldon, Murray, Delvin, Rockefeller, Harper, Kline, Keiser, Conway, Chase, Eide and Fraser).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 2/16/12, 2/20/12 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill (As Amended by Committee)

- Permits boards of trustees of college districts to add a student trustee.
- Permits the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges to add a student member.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 16 members: Representatives Seaquist, Chair; Carlyle, Vice Chair; Haler, Ranking Minority Member; Parker, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Asay, Buys, Crouse, Fagan, Hasegawa, Pollet, Reykdal, Sells, Springer, Warnick, Wylie and Zeiger.

Staff: Madeleine Thompson (786-7304).

Background:

Community and Technical College District Boards of Trustees.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Washington is divided into 30 community and technical college districts. Each district has a board of trustees (board) composed of five trustees appointed by the Governor. In making appointments, the Governor must give consideration to geographical diversity, and representing business, labor, women, and racial and ethnic minorities.

Each board for a district containing a technical college must include at least one member from business and one member from labor. Within Washington there are five technical colleges: Bates Technical College, Bellingham Technical College, Clover Park Technical College, Lake Washington Institute of Technology, and Renton Technical College.

Each board member must be a resident and qualified elector of the district. A board member may not be an employee of the community and technical college system, a board member of another school district, or a board member of another public or private educational institution.

State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) consists of nine members appointed by the Governor. At least two members must reside east of the Cascade Mountains. The Governor must attempt to provide geographic balance and give consideration to representation by labor, business, women, and racial and ethnic minorities. There is no requirement that the SBCTC include a student member. Members on the SBCTC serve four-year terms.

Summary of Amended Bill:

By a majority vote, the boards of trustees (board) of a college district may establish a sixth trustee position to be filled by a student. The student trustee is selected, by the Governor, from a list of three to five candidates submitted by the student government of that college district and serves a one-year term or until the student member's successor is appointed and qualified, whichever is later. The student must be a full-time student and in good standing at a college within the district throughout the student's term. The student trustee is disqualified if he or she fails to be enrolled at the college full-time or forfeits his or her academic standing. A new member must be appointed to replace the disqualified member. The student must excuse himself or herself from participation or voting on matters relating to the hiring, discipline, or tenure of faculty members and personnel, or any other matters pertaining to collective bargaining agreements.

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges is permitted to add a student member by majority vote of the board, and expanding the board to 10 members. The student must excuse himself or herself from voting on matters relating to the hiring, discipline, or any other matters relating to faculty, personnel, or collective bargaining agreements. If added, the student must be:

- appointed by the Governor with the consent of the Senate;
- enrolled at a community or technical college for at least six quarter credits per quarter during the academic year; and

- be in good standing with their college at the time of their appointment and throughout their term.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:

In addition to permitting the boards of trustees of college districts to add a sixth trustee to be filled by a student, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges may, by majority vote, add a tenth member who must be a student. The student, if added, must be appointed by the Governor with the consent of the Senate. The student must excuse himself or herself from voting on matters relating to the hiring, discipline, or any other matters relating to faculty, personnel, or collective bargaining agreements.

If added, the student must be:

- appointed by the Governor with the consent of the Senate;
- enrolled at a community or technical college for at least six quarter credits per quarter during the academic year; and
- be in good standing with their college at the time of their appointment and throughout their term.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) It is important to have students on boards of trustees (board) and to have students of different backgrounds. Students come from all walks of life and bring a valuable perspective. There are students who are single mothers, older students who have been working for years, and diverse students. A student trustee would bring the true pulse of the student body to the discussion of the board. This legislation has had a few years to evolve. It now has the flexibility for the colleges to see if it is the right time for them to make a change like this. This proposal gives them the option to add a student. This gives students a voice.

(With concerns) The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) already has substantial reach to hear the student voice. Students are involved in nearly all board efforts. There are student internships of students; students receive travel reimbursement to sit on decision-making task forces. The SBCTC has a member from labor and business but no faculty, administrators, or students.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Senator Shin, prime sponsor; Takhmina Bhuraeva, Sophia Trink, and Jamel Moxy, Bellevue College; Mike Bogatay, Washington Student Association;

Christopher Anderson, Renton Technical College Associated Student Government and Washington Community and Technical Colleges Student Association; and Jake Atwell-Scrivner, Washington Student Association.

(With concerns) Charlie Earl, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.